

GAYSTOIDS

VOLUME IV - NUMBER 1, MAY-JUNE 1978

50¢

GAYS AND THE FAMILY





DIALOGUE TOPICS

- | | |
|---------|----------------------------------|
| May 8 | Men and Women--Together??????? |
| May 22 | Gay stereotypes--Myth vs Reality |
| June 12 | VD and Gays |
| June 26 | Gay Legal Rights |
| July 10 | Communication processus |
| July 24 | Being gay in the straight world |

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GAY ST. LOUIS

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VOL. IV NO. 1
MAY-JUNE 1978

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ALTERNATIVE COFFEEHOUSE FRIDAYS

FIRST LINE

Gay St. Louis, as you can see, is still alive even though it has been unable to publish additional issues since November.

Explanations are in order. GSL began with an initial staff of twelve volunteers although this number was not anywhere near sufficient to publish this type of publication. They were willing and felt that there was a very definite need for this magazine in St. Louis.

After that first issue, many problems arose that forced GSL not to publish until now. One of the most important reasons was that of the twelve volunteers, ten members of the staff were no longer available due to moving out of the area, changing job situations or altered personal priorities. The main reason, though, was that GSL was forced to vacate its offices. Although new facilities were located, they were not ready for occupancy until after March 15th. Because of this, all equipment and files had to be placed in storage.

GSL now has a staff of four. Two remain from the original twelve and two new volunteers have said that they too believe St. Louis needs this type of publication.

Because the staff is volunteer, extremely small and in excess of two hundred hours of preparation are necessary before the printer receives copy ready for printing, it is necessary that GSL become a bimonthly publication---until sufficient staff is available.

If you believe GSL is need you can do two things to insure its existence and to help it become a monthly magazine.

First, a staff is needed to perform the varied jobs that go into producing a magazine; a news editor, copy editor, typists, feature writers, advertising representatives, production people and more. If you have experience or a desire to help, call 367-0492 and become a vital participant.

Second, fill out the subscription form in this issue. This will ensure that GSL is financially able to continue publishing.

With your help, GSL will continue to provide informative, educational and entertaining material to the St. Louis gay community.



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A GAY PERSPECTIVE REPORT:

THE 4TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MEN AND MASCULINITY

BY TERRY G.

On the Thanksgiving weekend (Nov. 24-27, 1977) nearly 400 men and a small number of women from all over the nation forfeited traditional turkey dinners to meet in St. Louis for the Fourth Annual Conference on Men and Masculinity, held at Washington University. The conference was organized by volunteers from men's groups in the St. Louis area. This year's participants, better organized than in previous years, made progress by establishing the Men's Alliance for Liberation and Equality (MALE)--a national men's organization that constitutes an unprecedented step.

This year's conferees also saw the passage of four specifically gay-related resolutions (all submitted by the gay task force), with unanimous votes for each. These items called for the end to stigmatization based on sexual orientation, the acknowledgement of the civil rights of gay people, the provision of equitable and sensitive governmental services for gay people, and the commitment of both gay and non-gay men to each other for the liberation of all from traditional sex roles. Also passed was a resolution introduced by the gay task force (as a general conference resolution) to boycott Joe and Charlie's tavern in Clayton, Mo., for refusing to serve two men from the conference because they held hands there.

The results of the Conference did not come easily. Over thirty gay men (who probably constituted the largest task force) worked hard to overcome a lot of the ignorance about, as well as oppression and neglect of, gay people by the conference. Gay-related issues at first were intended to be subsumed under another task force by some of the organizers. But adamant opposition by some gay men appeared to be the impetus for the creation of a separate gay task force. Moreover, only one gay-related workshop was scheduled for the entire Conference, and even this workshop was originally geared to the non-gay conferees whom the co-facilitators were told would constitute the majority of the conference attendance. Workshop participants, who

identified themselves overwhelmingly as gay or bisexual, expressed disappointment and anger. In short, the image of the Conference portrayed in the mass-media clearly showed a neglect of gay men--that is, an essentially non-gay conference about non-gay issues concerning men.

Many of the gay men who had been to previous conferences regarded the gross neglect of their presence and of gay issues as the continuation of a homophobic tradition begun at the first gathering in 1975 at Penn State. Sentiment ran high among them for reversing this trend, especially since two men at the St. Louis conference attacked both gay rights and gay involvement (although their positions were probably shared by no more than a handful of the conferees).

During the proceedings, there were moments of tension between gay participants and other members. In one instance, a progress report from the gay-related major workshop was devoted to the anger of its gay participants for the neglect of their presence and contributions. This anger was partly channeled into the drafting of the fourth resolution on the commitments of gay and non-gay men to each other within the men's movement. Included in it was a strong call for the recognition and appreciation of the presence, roles, and contributions of gay men in the history of the men's movement. Given what seemed to be an intentional downplay of gay issues at the conference, the overwhelmingly positive reception of this resolution came as a surprise to many of its gay backers.

In another instance, Sam Julty, one of the keynote speakers, was publicly challenged for his remark that while there were "some" gay men involved in the men's movement, the pursuit of men's liberation has been essentially an endeavor by heterosexual men. To counter this allegation, one spokesperson for the gay task force at a later time requested that all gay men who felt comfortable in revealing their identity stand up, so as to demonstrate their presence to the general conference. In response, about half of the 150 men at that session stood up--clear evidence of the gay involvement and contribution to the men's movement.

No impression of the Conference, in consequence, would be complete without stressing the warmth, support, love and intimacy which the gay men developed for

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bits 'n' pieces

GAY PRIDE GETS CITY FUNDS

SAN FRANCISCO--The Gay Freedom Day parade in this city has been given something of an official stamp of approval. Chief Administrative Officer Roger Boas announced that an allocation of \$10,000 was being awarded the Gay Pride Foundation on the recommendation of the Hotel Tax Advisory Fund Advisory Committee. The Committee said that the June 25 parade met their established criteria which required that the parade have a large number of participants and viewers, and that it get substantial support from sources other than the hotel tax.

In his letter to the parade sponsors, Boas said the committee "and I were influenced by your successful efforts last year to present a well-managed, orderly event, and we expect that this year's event will be handled in the same fashion."

LESBIAN LOVE LETTERS

NEW YORK CITY--A book of the love letters of lesbians is being planned by two New York city women. Joan Gorman and Diane G. Edington are asking women all over the country to share their experiences and send letters to be part of the collection. "This collection," the two have said, "will show all facets of...relationships--the ecstasies through the agonies, the beginnings, middle, ends, struggles, experiments, new beginnings, continuing friendships, and each woman's own growth through births, deaths, rebirths."

The compilers will need releases from the letter writers. So, if you do send them letters, include the writer's name and current addresses and Gorman and Edington will "tactfully contact them for releases if their letters are to be published."

Deadline for collection of letters is July 1, 1978. You can send them to Joan Gorman and Diane G. Edington, c/o The Women's Coffeehouse, 54 7th Ave. So., New York, NY 10014.

STUDIES AND SURVEYS

Two researchers, in separate studies, are seeking to interview gay men about their interpersonal relationships. Dr. Charles Silverstein, author of A Family Matter; A Parents' Guide to Homosexuality and The Joy of Gay Sex, has begun interviewing for a new book about gay male lovers. He is looking for those who have had either satisfactory or unsatisfactory affairs; those who have been together for more than 10 years; live in rural areas; heterosexually married men with gay lovers; gay men who have experienced the death of a lover after living together for many years; as well as men of all ages. Confidential interviews will be held in a number of geographical areas. For further information, contact Dr. Silverstein at 233 West 83rd St., New York, NY 10024.

Rex Reese is looking for gay men who are in couple relationships and have been living together for at least three years and no more than seven as part of the research for his Ph.D. dissertation at Purdue University. An additional requirement is that both persons should be between the ages of 20 and 38. Interested couples can contact Reese through Allen E. Segrist, Counseling and Personnel Services Section, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47907.

A professor of medical anthropology at the University of California-San Francisco, Ellen Lewin, has received a grant from the National Institute of Health to conduct a study of 100 single lesbian and heterosexual mothers to determine how they manage as heads of their families. She hopes her study will establish credibility for the single mother that may eventually affect social policy. Any woman who is interested in participating should contact Dr. Lewin at the Medical Anthropology Program, UCSF, 1320 Third Ave., San Francisco, CA 94143.

NEED A LEGAL REFERRAL???
CALL THE GAY HOTLINE

367-0084

CHANGES IN DC

WASHINGTON, DC--A new crime code which includes legalizing homosexual acts between consenting adults has been approved by the District of Columbia Law Review Commission. The changes in the code have been forwarded to Congress for action. Passage of the bill, without modifications could come by September. Congressional staffers reportedly have warned that the code could run into some legislative trouble.

The proposed code goes before the Senate and House District Committees, where hearings are expected to begin this month. The code can be revised by Congress at any point along the legislative process.

The code would repeal the existing sodomy law and set the age of consent at 16, except where one partner is between 11 and 15 years of age and the other partner is no more than five years older.

BRYANT ROUND-UP

Annita Bryant has announced plans to form a "legal task force" to combat the American Civil Liberties Union which she claims supports the moral decay of the country by fighting for gays and other "immoral groups." In Texas, the mayor of San Antonio, who made Bryant honorary mayor in February, has agreed to meet with local members of the gay community. In a recent appearance at the Washington Hilton, Bryant was met by the largest gay demonstration in the city's history. Over 3000 people participated.

SEXIST KPB TITLES CHANGED

WASHINGTON, DC--The U. S. Dept. of Labor has published a revised edition of the Dictionary of Occupational Titles which replaces the job titles viewed as sexist in the 1965 edition.

Instead of "linemen" or "foremen" or "workmen," firms should now be hiring "supervisors" and "operators." Such titles as "scrub woman" and "cigarette girl" have now been changed to "cleaner" or "cigarette vendor."

The new dictionary is designed to make it easier for employers to hire women for all jobs, and to make it more difficult to discriminate in pay between men and women with the same job description.

AESTHETIC UNREALISM

NEW YORK--Forty-three men and six women signed a large advertisement in the March 30 New York Times to assert their "conversion" from homosexuality to heterosexuality through the vehicle of "Aesthetic Realism," a neo-religion which claims to offer its members a new way to see the world. The statement was made in response to a Sunday Times Magazine article three weeks before entitled "Homosexuality on Campus."

The statement credits AR's founder, Eli Siegel, and a "teaching trio" of three other men with changing "the way we see the world, the way we see women, and we are no longer homosexual."

"Aesthetic Realism is a way of seeing the world and oneself that says: One, the purpose of everyone is to like the world; Two, the way to like the world and the things in it is to see both as the aesthetic oneness of opposites; Three, the greatest danger for a person is to have contempt for the world and what is in it, despite their aesthetic structure."

INDY CONFERENCE

INDIANAPOLIS, IN--The first Midwest Gay/Lesbian Awareness Conference will be held June 30 - July 2 at the Michigan Street campus of Indiana University. Sponsored by the Indianapolis Coalition for Human Rights, the conference will feature Barbara Gittings and Allan Spear as keynote speakers. Gittings is Coordinator of the Task Force on Gay Liberation of the American Library Assoc. and Spear is an openly gay State Senator from Minnesota.

Workshops, films, panel discussions, a dance and a free concert will highlight the conference. Individuals who wish to register for the conference are asked to write to the Coalition for Human Rights, Box 20124, Indianapolis, IN 46220, or call (317) 846-0780.

GAY HOT LINE



Mon. - Fri.
6 to 11 P.M.

367-0084

Sat. - Sun.
Noon to 6 P.M.

A THANKSGIVING TALE

I really like to dance, so it wasn't unusual to see me at Martin's that Saturday night out on the dance floor. What was unusual was that I was dancing with a short red-haired woman. And what was even more unusual was that that woman was my Mom.

It's been a little over a year since I told my Mom I was gay. We've always been close, and it was getting uncomfortable having to lie to her, and explain away my "close friends," especially the older ones. Granted, the fact that she lived an hour's drive away made it easier to avoid the situation, but there would still be times when I'd have to either invent a girl-friend, or just be conspicuously silent concerning my love life.

The problem finally came to a head on Thanksgiving of last year. I had been seeing Randy for a little over a month, and we were still very fascinated by each other. Since his parents lived out-of-state, Randy had left for home several days earlier. Well, a couple of days before I was to go home, I received a letter from him. It seems that he and his father had gone out for a few drinks and "men" talk. In the course of the evening, they got around to exchanging confidences, and Randy decided to tell his father about his being gay, and more specifically, about me. He handed his father a picture of me, and said, "This is who I've been screwing lately."

Needless to say, Randy's father went into shock. He withdrew from Randy, both verbally and physically, for two days. When he started talking again, all he said to Randy was at least to remain bisexual, and above all, not to tell his mother. Randy was rightfully upset about it when he wrote.

With Randy's disclosure weighing heavily on my mind, I decided it was time to tell my Mom the truth about my lifestyle. (My father has been dead for several years now.) And going home for the holidays was going to be the time to do it. However, Thanksgiving is not one of the best times to have a confidential talk with

my Mom, considering I have four brothers, one sister, a couple of in-laws, and various other relatives and acquaintances, all of whom converged at my Mom's for turkey and small talk. But, finally, after dinner, with everyone either gone home or gone visiting, I found myself alone with her. She was doing the dishes while I was trying to eat a piece of pie at the kitchen table. Usually she and I joke around and cut up; that night the silence was ominous.

After a few false starts, I managed to get out, "Mom, I've got something to tell you."

"I know what it is," was her answer.

Now that threw me for a loop. How could she?

"No, Mom, it's not about grass or anything like that."

"I know."

I started to bite my fingernails.

"What is it then?"

"No," she replied, all the time washing her dishes. "I want you to tell me."

"No, you tell me if you know. I'll tell you if you're wrong."

So she washed another plate, rinsed it and put it in the rack, and without looking at me, said, "You have an inclination towards men."

I laughed, whether from relief or from embarrassment, I don't know, probably both. "Yeah, you're right." Then, "Are you upset?"

"No," she said. "I did all my crying two weeks ago when I found out."

"Oh...two weeks ago? How did you find out?"

"Tom told me."

Tom is my younger brother with whom I shared an apartment. I guess I wasn't as subtle as I'd always thought I was. But before I could question her further, she started talking, almost as if from script.

"John, I think you're just confused. You're still young; you're just getting into it. You can see a doctor and change if you really want to."

"Mom, I'm not just getting into it."

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In every society in which gay people are oppressed, gay men and women have had major difficulties coping with the question of "family." The problems come in two areas: First, how to relate as a gay person to one's parents and relatives - whether to be open and honest and risk the possible pain on both sides, or to hide one's sexual preference and lead a double life. Second, how to respond to the pressures of society to marry someone of the opposite sex and create another nuclear family

What is a family but a collection of individuals related by blood and chance? Or is it something more? Could it be a grouping of loving and nurturing individuals living together out of choice? The nuclear family of today is a relatively recent phenomenon, having become widespread only in the last 200 years with the industrial revolution and the sharp in-

crease in urbanization. In less urbanized and less industrialized societies, extended families were and are common, with various generations living and working together teaching one another, helping one another passing on traditions. Today, American families are atomized, divided up into nuclear families to increase consumption, with old people shunted off to die alone. Single people, who had been very much a part of extended families, are now seen as strange, threatening, perhaps even un-American.

As gay people, many of us have not heeded society's injunction to marry the opposite sex and create nuclear families. Yet we have created our own families out of common oppression and common interests, and out of love. Throughout our history, gay women and men have formed families with lovers, significant others, friends.

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SOME OF US CAN'T TURN TO JUST ANYBODY FOR HELP.

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FAMILY

THERE ARE NO JEWISH HOMOSEXUALS

It was a hot, humid, August evening in St. Louis the night I told my parents I was gay. They were out here visiting from New England and were staying in my un-air conditioned apartment, and were to leave the next morning. We had been arguing all day about little things and I felt pushed to the wall. So, in a fit of anger, and stupidity, I told them I was gay. I wasn't happy about being gay. I blamed my stereotyped dominant mother and weak father and wanted to hurt them. I succeeded.

My folks are uneducated Orthodox Jews, and it tore them apart to have a gay son. They did not feel responsible for my being gay, although I tried to lay guilt on them. They saw it as a matter of choice on my part. Mom blamed my non-Jewish friends for making me gay, stating with much authority that there are no Jewish homosexuals. Dad had always been nasty about effeminate gays. After telling me that my education was worthless if I was gay, he threatened to shoot me.

There was no understanding at all. They wanted to take me home with them, believing that if I lived in their house, I would no longer be gay. At one point, Mom asked if I had ever slept with a "girl". When I said that I hadn't, she triumphantly asked how I knew I was gay then, if I had never tried women. My folks were also very concerned about whom I had told. They wanted no one else in the family, or the world, to know this horrible thing, and feared that word would get back to our home town. And so it went for several of the most miserable hours of my life, with crying, screaming, pleading on all sides.

I finally convinced them that I should stay in St. Louis instead of going home with them. I promised that I would see a psychiatrist and get "cured." My parents were not happy about this, not really believing in the modern notions of

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GAYS AND THE NUCLEAR FAMILY

There has been much publicity on the gay threat to the nuclear family. We have been accused of actively trying to destroy it by recruiting its youth, by our morality, by our very existence. What is this nuclear family? It is simply mother, father and children; it is the kind of family in which most gay people grew up. It is also an ideal of American life which is decreasing in importance as the divorce rate increases and the number of single-parent families grows. In the ideal nuclear family, the father works, and the mother cares for the home and the children. This too is changing as more and more women are leaving the home to fulfill themselves or to enable the family budget to keep pace with inflation.

As this ideal, stereotyped, "Father Knows Best" family becomes threatened by societal change, people who fear any alteration in American life become frightened, and feel a need to place the blame on someone or something. Anita Bryant charges that homosexuality is the cause of this "deterioration"; Phyllis Schlafly attacks the women's movement. None seek to find the real causes: the American economy; the increased awareness of oppression, who want to bring substantive change to society. These people are not destroying the nuclear family; they are simply part of the changing and growing society.

As gays, we know that we do not attack the nuclear family from which we come and in which many of us are parents. We have no need for recruitment, for our numbers naturally remain a constant ten per cent of the population. What we want to bring to an end is not the nuclear family but the system of oppression and degradation which labels gay women and men as sick, immoral and degenerate, which leads to untold suffering and numerous suicides, and which splits parents from children, when one or the other is gay.

M. Kaye

CHILD CUSTODY

There are hundreds of thousands of lesbian mothers in the U.S.--perhaps a third of all lesbians in the country. More and more of them are coming out of the closet, but, as they do, they face considerable prejudice from people to who "lesbian" and "mother" remain antithetical terms. Custody decisions are supposed to be based on what is in the best interests of the children, but judges who consider homosexuality inherently wrong are denying custody to lesbian mothers regardless of

how fit they may be individually (or how unfit the father or foster parent). Although many of the cases that go to court are lost by the lesbian mother, there have been some significant victories.

The following groups have been formed specifically to fight for lesbian mothers' custody rights; we recommend them to those needing their services and urge that those who can afford to send donations:

*Lesbian Mothers National Defense Fund in Seattle provides access to case

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I believe your parents caught your-drift.

EDITORIALS AND

EDITORIAL

Gay men and women comprise the only minority group whose parents are not part of that same minority. Indeed, parents and families may stand with the oppressors, rather than provide the love and support we need as we learn to understand ourselves. "We are the people our mothers warned us about." Learning to live with that idea, and then learning to deal with our gayness in relation to our mothers and fathers are difficult tasks. Not all families have to be made aware of their child's gayness. There are those families that cannot deal with it or accept it, and react violently, not because they are evil, but because their own upbringing makes it impossible. If we, because we are gay, must painfully work through our own self-hatred, brought about by society, then non-gays may have a more difficult job eliminating or dealing with their hatred of homosexuals. There are families that have reacted with love and support, realizing that parental or familial love is stronger than religious or societal prejudices. Other families will achieve this knowledge after some period of time. Still other families will never accept a gay member. No person should be forced to tell his/her family. No family should be told in anger, out of a desire to cause pain or inflict guilt. The best argument is our own happiness and contentment with ourselves as gays.

EDITORIAL

Midcontinent Life Services Corporation recently announced that it had received tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. This important ruling is part of the beginning of a major reversal of IRS policy which routinely refused to grant such tax-deductible status unless the applying organization stated that homosexuality is, "a sickness, disturbance, or diseased pathology". This policy has kept gay organizations, such as MLSC, from receiving the important tax-deductible contributions which are necessary to fund the major educational projects on the role of gay persons in society.

12 GAY ST. LOUIS

MLSC was incorporated in the state of Missouri in January of 1976 by Galen Moon. Mr. Moon has stated many times that the reason for MLSC's existence is to help gay people. Upon retirement from participation with MLSC, due to failing health, Mr. Moon insisted that gay "...people...are our first concern."

Gay St. Louis is in complete agreement that gay people should be the first concern of MLSC and congratulates that organization on its tax-exempt status, received as a result of the major policy reversal of the IRS. But GSL must pose the question of where is MLSC going and what are its plans for the future?

Dear GSL:

Much has been written lately about the economic power of Gays. Survey after survey has reported that Gay people tend to make a lot of money, which they eagerly use on travel, cars, clothes, etc. (unlike straights who would use the same amount of cash on diapers and detergent). Boycotts of Florida citrus and of Coors Beer were started with that in mind, and predictions were made of the panic a Gay boycott would create in these companies' Board of Directors. Gays were urged to buy from Gay-owned businesses and to support Gay-run services.

What destroyed this glorious picture was that it rested on two fallacies. One is the fact that not all Gays earn a lot of money or, if they do, do not necessarily spend it on leisure items or activities. One suspects that the reason slick magazines publish surveys on Gay economic power is not so much to state a fact but rather to attract advertisers to their magazines. If Gays do have more money for leisure it is because they do not have a family to support--a fact that would apply to Single straights as well.

The other fallacy is the idea that all Gays would unite under a cause and follow it to its end. The citrus boycott is a good example. Had all Lesbians and Gays supported such a program, maybe the Florida Citrus Commission would have fallen apart. Instead we have Gays drinking OJ in their homes, Gay bars serving it and Gay organizations providing it in their functions.

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CORRESPONDENCE

To Whom It May Concern,

I wish to suggest here that your new magazine, "Gay St. Louis", take a very serious look through a series of articles on the importance of gays and gay couples taking (and making) a much more creative, constructive part in the restoration of many of our city's very beautiful old homes. So very many of which are continually going from bad to worse.

Realize, so many of these extraordinary old homes could be had for practically nothing. And with so many empty lots amongst them one could also practically obtain these lots for nothing; adding them to other lots creating very beautiful green garden districts around pleasantly spaced homes. You, know some of us have undoubtedly made a very strong commitment to the central West End. But then we have virtually untapped the many incredible old homes enclosed by Lindell, Grand and Delmar Boulevards, and Sarah Street.

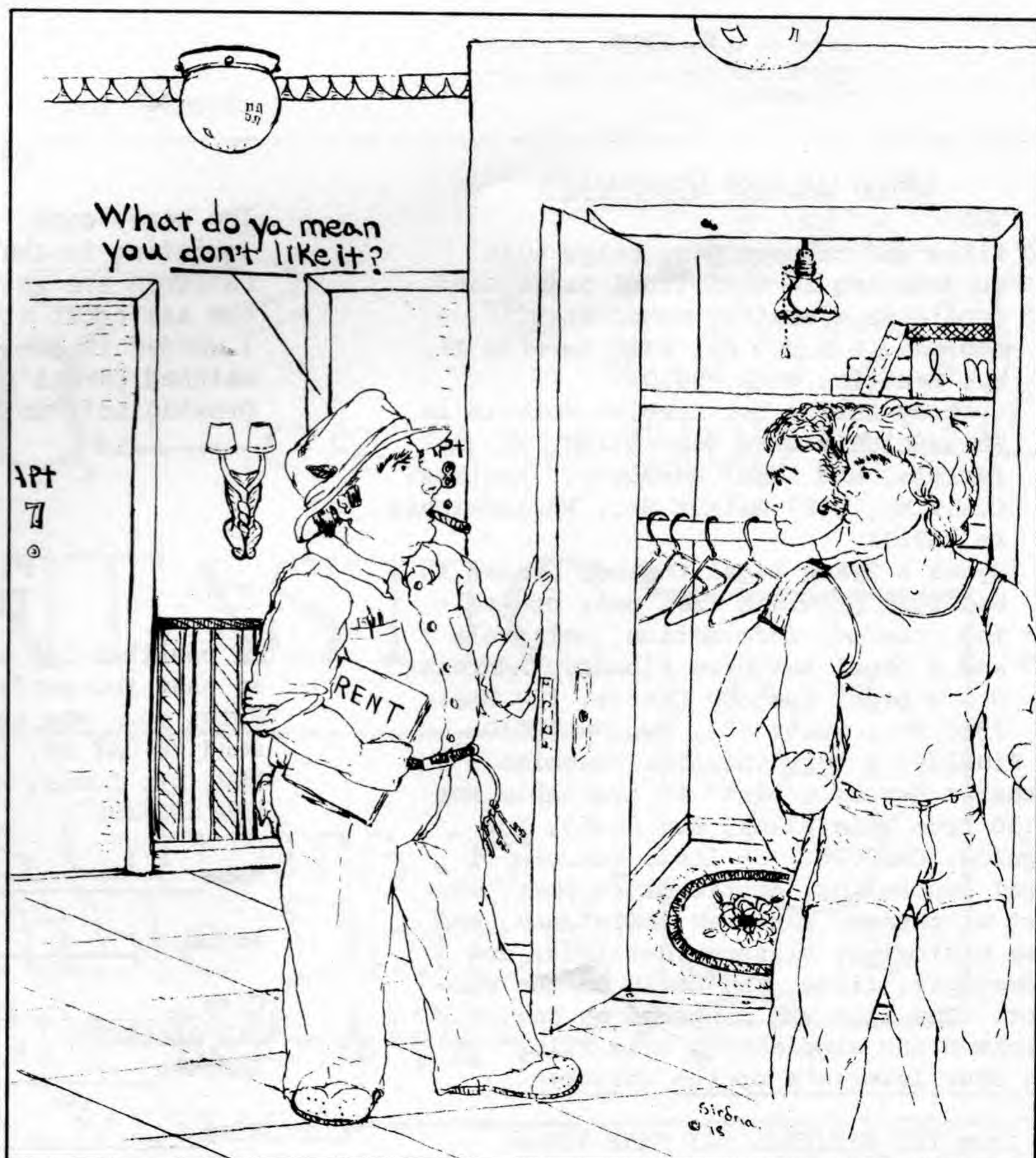
Please consider this. Recognize, your new magazine has the potential of being a truly tremendous "cultural" asset, not only towards the benefit of our city, but in giving the gay community the more positive image that it needs to be accepted as an enriching, constructive part of society.

Yours most very truly,
Ms. Sasha Ohmeyer
P.S. You need a section devoted specially to Architectural and Environmental matters.

Dear Ms. Ohmeyer,

Everyone on our staff and most of the gay people I know, would agree with you on the importance of preserving St. Louis'

architectural heritage. In fact, gay people have played major roles in the rehabilitation of Lafayette Square, the Central West End and other older areas in the city. We would like to have a regular column on architecture, interior decoration and the urban environment, but so far we have not found anyone with the time to write the column and the expertise necessary to make it worthwhile. As soon as we do, the column will be a regular feature of GSL. Readers who are interested, and qualified to write such a column, are invited to send a sample article to GSL, 10 South Euclid, Suite 202, St. Louis, Missouri 63108.



GAY ROOTS (CONTINUED)

One such family was that of Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Tolkas whose homes in France were places of learning and familial warmth for many visiting Americans. Many such families have existed and do now exist. For us, these families of our own choosing are sources of warmth, support, love and nurturing.

Roots are our sources of being, of what we are and what we may become through what has gone before. In our early years, our blood families gave us our roots, for better or worse. As adults, we are now ready to form our own selves, to discover our own roots and to be the roots of the future. We can form our families with our sisters and brothers in the gay community for holiday meals, for living together, for love and joy and strength, and for our own roots.

M. Kaye

CHILD CUSTODY (CONTINUED)

files and transcripts, helps with fundraising in individual cases, and publishes a monthly newsletter.

Address: L.M.N.D.F., 2446 Lorentz Pl. N., Seattle, Wash. 98109

*Custody Action for Lesbian Mothers in Philadelphia does counseling, referrals, and legal advocacy. Address: C.A.L.M., 1427 Walnut St., Philadelphia Pa. 19102

*Dykes & Tykes Legal Custody Center in New York provides free peer counseling, custody information, referrals and a legal resource library. Address: D & T Legal Custody Center, 110 East 23rd St., Suite 502, Ny, Ny 10010

Finally, a very valuable "Lesbian Mothers' Resource List" is available for \$1.50 from Iris Films, Box 26463, Los Angeles, CA90026. It lists sources of legal counseling, emotional support, expert witnesses, research assistance, and case histories; classes; hotlines; and videotapes, films, and books on the subject. The list was prepared by Mary K. Blackmon and supplements Iris Films' In the Best Interests of the Children.

from THE NATIONAL GAY TASK FORCE

14 GAY ST. LOUIS

MEN AND MASCULINITY (CONTINUED)

each other over the four days of meetings. Their solidarity, closeness, and concern for one another--whether in work sessions or just in free moments--was moving, especially considering the short period of time they had together.

All in all, however, it remains to be seen whether the consciousness of the conferees has been raised about their roles in the gay plight and oppression. The impact of gay men was indisputably evident at this Conference, and the next conference (tentatively scheduled for December of 1978 in Los Angeles) promises to have more gay-related programs. Many gay men felt that what was done this year was only a beginning, and they promise even more visibility, action, and involvement in future conferences and in the men's movement in the years to come.

CRUCIFIXION

The heavy ovens breathe upon the holy city
squinting in the desert.
Children are whistling at the fair.
The ass cocks its head at silence.
I wonder if the soldiers
watched Christ's penis
growing soft on the cross.

Gary Doyle

PLANNING TO MOVE?

if possible let us know 6 weeks in advance so that you won't miss an issue of GSL. Print your new and old addresses below and send to GAY ST. LOUIS, 10 So. Euclid, Suite 202, St. Louis, Mo. 63108.

NEW ADDRESS

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

OLD ADDRESS

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

ABANDONED

I am a poet
of crippled lines tonight
where row by row
my poems abandon me.

Had you not fled,
had you not run away
I would not be driven to desperate acts.

On windless nights
I hang a bell
unnoticed beside the door.

Gary Doyle

Announcement to a Passerby

Congratulations!
I am pleased
to announce
that by unanimous
vote, you have
just become my
fantasy lover.

John Wehmeyer

Poem 1

There is a new world coming--
Without negative feeling
Without social pressures
Without badness in people.

When that day comes--
People will be able to be people
People will enjoy life
People will love each other
People will be free.

But as for me, I will have lived my life
As best as I know how.
My name and face may only be a memory
For I will never see the day
When I will live with happiness
Or peace on this earth.

Nella

*Poetry is the language in which
man explores his own amazement.*
—Christopher Fry



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SGT. MATLOVICH

I love you.
from all the lesbian women
who could never love men.

Billie

January 1, 1974

Cold Shudders hug.
"Please warm me in friendship"
Said a blanket lying on the bed.

Gary Miller

MUSIC

The sky's blue is starting to pale,
The sun has politely retired.
It's still too bright to turn on the lights
so I open the door to catch the grey.

My man turns on the faucets in the room off the hall,
and water splashes in the claw-footed tub.
He throws in the soap, the thunk echoes faintly.
I hear his feet plod bare across the floor,
the brush of his shirt pulled over his head,
and the tinkling of his belt as the jeans come off.

He winces out loud as he steps in the water,
too hot for comfort, too proud to step back out.
So I smile to myself as I hear him in there,
lowering himself, an ouch every inch.
Finally he sighs as he's totally in,
sounding remarkable akin to his sigh as he comes.
I thrill with just the sound.

He splashes as he explores his body
with soap-covered fingers,
he hasn't used a cloth since college.
And soon I hear a song,
No shit--I swear he sings.
But then, so do I.

So I quietly push the screen door close,
and silently slipping out of my shoes,
I undo my belt as I start towards his music.

And soon the duet begins.

John Wehmeyer

FEAR

Wooden objects break across the knees
of discipline's disciples daily.

Cruelty reigns in a world scared-to-death
It passes as strong.

Bricks are thrown when a tender-touch
is needed.

The hidden child starves to death daily.

Billie

AFTER SAPPHO

I confess

that which I love most
is most forbidden

Again and again
the wind-driven rain...

more constant than a lover!

Gary Doyle

"THINGS WILL OCCUR..."

Things will occur to you
on days when it's raining:
That clouds will burst with what
they're containing--

No matter how full, they
Cannot swallow their weight
Nor spread themselves out and
Evaporate;

That the rain is seducer
To the streaming wet ground,
absorbing the inner,
Natural sound;

That rain is no lover
Without good reason;
That soil must be moist and
Full of season;

That I love thunderstorms
And that the earth is you;
That it's really pouring--
The rain is blue.

Archie Jordan

BOOK-LOOK 1977

AN OVERVIEW AND OPINION

BY BYRON DAVIDSON

In spite of setbacks to the acceptance and understanding of gay people and gay issues (engineered by people such as Anita Bryant and Phyllis Schlafly), there were still some hopeful signs in 1977. One of these was the fact that at least 128 good non-fiction books about gay people were available in book stores. In fiction at least 82 titles were available--ranging from classic lesbian novels such as Virginia Woolf's Orlando and Djuna Barnes' Nightwood to Rita Mae Brown and Robin Jordan--and from Thomas Mann's highly complex Death In Venice to the soft porn of Gordon Merrick's latest erotic romance, An Idol for Others. There has also been a growing interest in homophile poetry, evidenced by the Gay Sunshine Press books edited by Winston Leyland and Lynn Loind-eir's moving, A Lesbian Estate. Though very little gay poetry aspires to great thought, metaphysics, or difficult language it is written from a sensitive, loving, and sometimes sad heart; it speaks of the joys and pains of being human and being gay.

If you are not familiar with gay literature, a great book to begin with is Dennis Altman's Homosexual: Oppression and Liberation. This is the finest study in one volume to date. Gay American History, edited by Jonathan Katz, is of equal importance. Katz chronicles and documents the history of gay people in the United States from 1500 to the present. He is currently working on a second volume.

Charles Silverstein provides a valuable tool in the important task of educating parents in A Family Matter. Equally valuable for anyone who loves someone gay (parents, lovers, and friends) is Don Clark's Loving Someone Gay. For a literary history, Roger Ausen has given us Playing the Game: The Homosexual Novel in America, in which he traces the evolution of the gay male novel and the lesbian female novel from the 1920's to the present.

In the area of religion, two famous books (because they have been officially banned) are Human Sexuality: New Directions in American Catholic Thought by the Catholic Theological Society of America, and John McNeill's The Church and the Homosexual. The Universal Fellowship Press, Metro-

politan Community Church's press, has done a great service by publishing Norman Pittenger's Gay Lifestyles: A Christian Interpretation, and Marcia Lee Geyer's Human Rights or Homophobia. Two briefer but worthy books are Ralph Blair's An Evangelical Look at Homosexuality and Holier-Than-Thou Hocus-Pocus and Homosexuality. Two other standard studies are currently available: Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition by D. S. Bailey, and Oberhauzer's Is Gay Good? Ethics, Theology, and Homosexuality.

This writer personally prefers above others Vern L. Bullough's Sexual Variance in Society and History. Bullough is richer, deeper, and broader. His book chronologically organized, looks at attitudes toward sexual lifestyles, values, and oppression in many cultures, including the ancient Near East, China, India, the Arab world, and primitive cultures. He excellently presents a thorough examination of anti-sexuality (erotophobia) in the western world, and he ends with twentieth-century attitudes and explanations for contemporary changes. This book fills gaps left by Churchill's Homosexuality A Cross Culture-Cross Species Approach, a notable book in its own right. Two other interesting studies are A Different Drummer: Metaphysics and the Homosexual by Brian D. Quinn, for those not concerned with the Christian problem, and a Marxist appraisal of Gay oppression by Bob McCubbin entitled The Gay Question.

Mention must be made of the American Library Association's A Gay Bibliography, edited by Barbara Gittings. For twenty-five cents you must not pass this up. This pro-gay bibliography is frequently up-dated and is the best way to keep informed of all good books.

An important facet of recent major publishing has been titles dealing with gay women. Women have been, overall, the invisible of the invisible, but this situation is changing. More good fiction and non-fiction is appearing by and about gay women than gay men. For example, most gay male fiction tends to be concerned with "making it," while gay women's fiction encompasses what may be called the total phenomena of a person's being. I suspect part of the problem in most fiction of this sort is the sexual expectation pattern we have adopted from heterosexual society--which is genital centered. Sexuality in

continued on page 21

A THANKSGIVING TALE (CONTINUED)

I've been having affairs for over a year now. In fact, Randy's my current."

"Oh," she said. Then after a few more dishes, "It's all my fault. I should never have let you get so close to me after Dad died."

"Mom, it's not your fault. It's no one's fault. Besides, all this talk about fault. It's not something you have to blame someone for--it's my life. I'm happy. You have nothing to feel guilty about."

"Oh well," she sighed. "I suppose it's no worse than alcoholism, or any other disease."

What.

"Mom, it's not a disease. Do I look sick to you? It's just a matter of choice. I just prefer men to women. That's all."

So she kept doing the dishes. Finally I asked, "You don't hate me, do you?"

"No, of course I don't hate you. You're my son, and I love you."

Then, again almost according to script, a friend came by for me, and I was off. Things were sort of strained between my Mom and me for a while afterwards. We both knew that my being gay didn't really matter, yet neither of us was as sure about the other as we used to be. We still laughed, and cut up, but it seemed different, in a subtle sort of way.

Meanwhile, the relationship between Randy and I had started to deteriorate. It takes time for me to love, and by the time I had fallen in love with Randy, he had fallen out of love with me. One night, after we'd had a scene in a bar, I stormed out, and after waiting until five a.m. for him to come home, I took a handful of pills. I didn't know what they were, nor did I care. Luckily, nothing happened. I calmed down, called a friend the next morning, and talked it out.

Somehow, Mom found out. I had a habit of calling home every few days just to check in, and the next time I called, she confronted me with it. I couldn't deny it. She yelled at me a little, and then she told me that she loved me, that she's always loved me, and that she didn't know what she'd do if anything ever happened to me.. It was the first time she'd ever said anything like that to me. And

the best part about it was that I knew she meant it. From that point on, the relationship between us grew.

We began to really talk to each other, and more importantly, we began to listen. I began to see her as more than just my mother; she was a woman with needs and desires, much like my own. We gave each other advice. We learned to trust. We became friends.

As for my brothers and sister, I haven't directly told them. They have their lives--I have mine. Who I sleep with is my concern, not theirs. If, by chance, one of them would actually ask, I would tell them the truth. Besides, I really think that most of them must know anyhow. Tom knew, so it wouldn't be too unrealistic to think the others might know too.

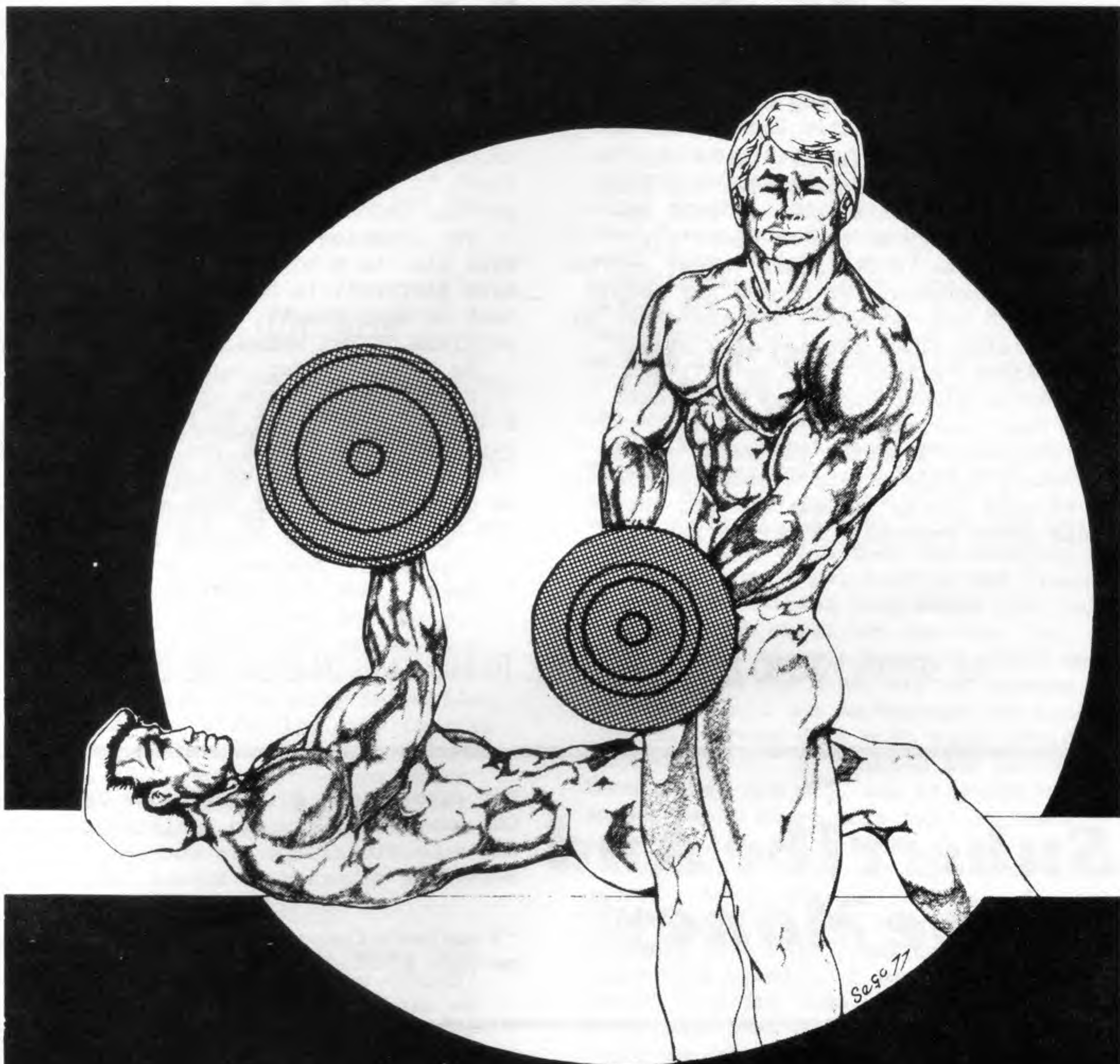
Which brings us up-to-date. Last month, I decided to spend an entire day with Mom, only instead of my going there, as I usually do, I brought her up here. It was sort of a mini-vacation. We lunched in Clayton, shopped at Famous, visited some friends I'd been wanting her to meet, had supper at White Castle (who said we had taste?), and went dancing at Martin's.

At first, I was a little nervous about asking her to go. I know she likes to relax and "boogie," and Ste. Genevieve offers little in the way of discos. I was tempted to take her to a straight place, or Herbie's, but I finally decided that she should see where her son spends a good number of his Saturday nights. So I suggested, and she accepted.

Well, it was strange. Nice, but strange. She came, and met a lot of my friends. None of them seemed particularly shocked by her being there; in fact, they really enjoyed her. She asked one of my friends, who never dances with me, to dance. When he refused, she grabbed him and dragged him out to the dance floor anyway. Mom is small, but feisty.

Overall, the night was a success. We both had a little too much to drink, but we danced with each other, with friends, talked, and just enjoyed ourselves. It was also successful inasmuch as it convinced Mom that my being gay was not that much different from being straight. The people she met were nice. They were friendly and they were sincere. She liked

continued on page 21



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NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of GAY ST. LOUIS will be our second annual edition of The Gay Guide to St. Louis. In this issue we will describe the variety of places where gay people socialize in St. Louis: bars, coffee-houses, restaurants. Of course gay people may be found most anywhere and there are no clear dividing lines between gay, mixed and "straight" places. But we will describe those places where gay women and men do feel comfortable.

We will also describe the areas of St. Louis where gay people have made contributions to city living in restoration, shopping and urban renewal. Numerous gay org-

anizations have come into existence in St. Louis in the past five years, and we will provide information about these groups.

The question of being gay in St. Louis will also be a topic of discussion. Is it more difficult to be gay here than on the East or West Coast? What are the particular problems of gay women and men in St. Louis?

Be sure to order, subscribe to, buy or borrow the next issue of GSL. If you are going to live in St. Louis and if you are gay, this is an issue you can't do without. If you have friends coming to visit, pick up an extra copy for them as an introduction to gay life in St. Louis.

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A THANKSGIVING TALE (CONTINUED)

them. Since that night at Martin's, Mom doesn't worry about me as much. She asks about my friends, and she wants to come back and visit them again. I think she realized that night that I really was gay, that I really do sleep with men, but that it really doesn't matter. I'm still her son, I still love her, and she still loves me.

BOOK-LOOK 1977 (CONTINUED)

"Lesbiana" is part of the scene, of course, but luckily it is only part of it, for it recognizes that although eroticism is human, pornography that is merely titillation can become boring at best.

In St. Louis there are several stores that stock good, current titles in gay literature. In the West End, there are Left Bank Books and The Book Shelf, both of which deserve our support for their efforts to supply books that appeal to a gay lifestyle. Books &, the campus bookstore at Washington University in Mallinckrodt Center, has a section specifically devoted to gay liberation. An excellent booklist is also published by the Oscar Wilde Memorial Bookshop, 15 Christopher St., New York, N. Y. 10014.

LETTERS (CONTINUED)

Think of all the anti-Gay concerns, from Coors Beer to the Roman Catholic Church, which receive vital support, in terms of consumption, labor and support, from Gay people. Anita Bryant and John Briggs have more Gay economic support than either they or the Gays realize or admit.

The first fallacy is venial, and can be safely ignored except in that it gives a distorted view of the Gay Community. The second one is more serious. I believe that before any serious effort at economic politics is launched we must first get our Community to cooperate. We must not use our money unwisely. We must stop giving our money to our enemies, and instead give it to Gay or pro-Gay outfits. We do have a great economic power if we learn how to use it. But until we do, all the talk about "Gay clout" will be just talk.

J. Monteagudo
Miami, FL

THERE ARE NO JEWISH HOMOSEXUALS (CONTINUED)

psychiatry, but they agreed that I could try it. So I started seeing a psychiatrist, not to get "cured," but to find out how to deal with my parents. One week after I started therapy, Mom was already asking if I was "cured" yet. Eight months later, I wrote my folks that I was indeed "cured" and going out with "nice Jewish girls." My parents accepted this, although, for the next few years, Mom would ask if I was still hanging around with those kind" and threaten me with dire consequences if I were lying. I continued my story about the "cure" and the women I was dating.

It's been almost eight years since I first told my folks, and the game goes on. I don't like it or enjoy it. I would prefer to be able to be open with them, to share with them the totality of my life, my joys, sorrows and friends, rather than telling them about only half my life. But there are parents, who, for a variety of reasons based on their own parents, who for a variety of reasons based on their own background and socialization, cannot deal with their child's homosexuality. My parents are among them. They are old, and it would be senseless to cause them pain at their age.

I wish that I had not told them, for it caused a great deal of suffering for all of us. It would have been easier if I had told them when I was comfortable and happy with myself. I would not have wanted to blame them or hurt them, and I would have been better prepared to handle their questions and comments. Perhaps then they might have been able to understand it to some degree, and accept me as I am, as their son. But the past cannot be rewritten. And I must live with my mistakes.

M. Kaye

NEED A MEDICAL REFERRAL???

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June 2, 1978

RATES: Individuals; 12 cents a word. Minimum 20 words. Businesses; 30 cents a word. Minimum 20 words. Bold face words; 20 cents each for individuals and 40 cents each for businesses. Box Numbers; we will assign you a box number for \$2.25 per month if you pick up your mail at GAY ST. LOUIS, 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. Monday through Friday or \$3.50 per month if you wish us to forward it to you. Mail is forwarded on the 15th and 30th of each month. Repeats; there are no discounts for repeating classifieds. Please include your area code if your ad includes a phone number.

WHEN ANSWERING a classified that includes a box number please do the following; Put your reply in an envelope, address it to: Gay St. Louis, 10 South Euclid Ave., Suite 202, St. Louis, Mo. 63108. Write the box number in the lower left hand corner of the envelope and mail it to us.

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22 GAY ST. LOUIS

PEN PALS

We get many requests from gays in prison to put pen pal ads in for them. Limited space prevents us from printing as many of these ads as we would like to, since the prisoners do not have the funds to pay for their ads. We will print more if any of our readers will contribute. For each \$3.00 we receive, we will print one more pen pal ad. Send checks to Penpals, Gay St. Louis, box 1975, 10 So. Euclid, Suite 202, St. Louis, Mo. 63108.

GWM, 25 yr., 160 lb., 6'2", likes dancing, swimming, good food, reading, nudity, outdoors life, rock music to contemporary music needs pen pals. Write Michael Butler, 062025, location M-2-5-8, P. O. Box 747, Starke, Fla. 32091.

22, 6'3", 155, brown hair, brown eyes, active in all sex. Terry Crutchfield, B-039230, P. O. Box 747, Starke, FL 32091, F-3-N-5.

5'11", 155, very attrac. Virgo, love reading and writing about practically anything 25 years old. Will answer all. Sidney Davis, 010501, K-3-N-8, P.O. Box 747, Starke, FL 32091.

Stud 50 needs mature friend with same interests. Classical and Jazz music, art, architecture, cooking, gardening, shut in acceptable. Write Box 3103

Gay male, 16 yrs, 5'9", 145 lbs, B/B, wants to meet others 15 to 30 for friendship and companionship, lives in West County area. Have met some nice people; want to meet more. Write Box 3102.

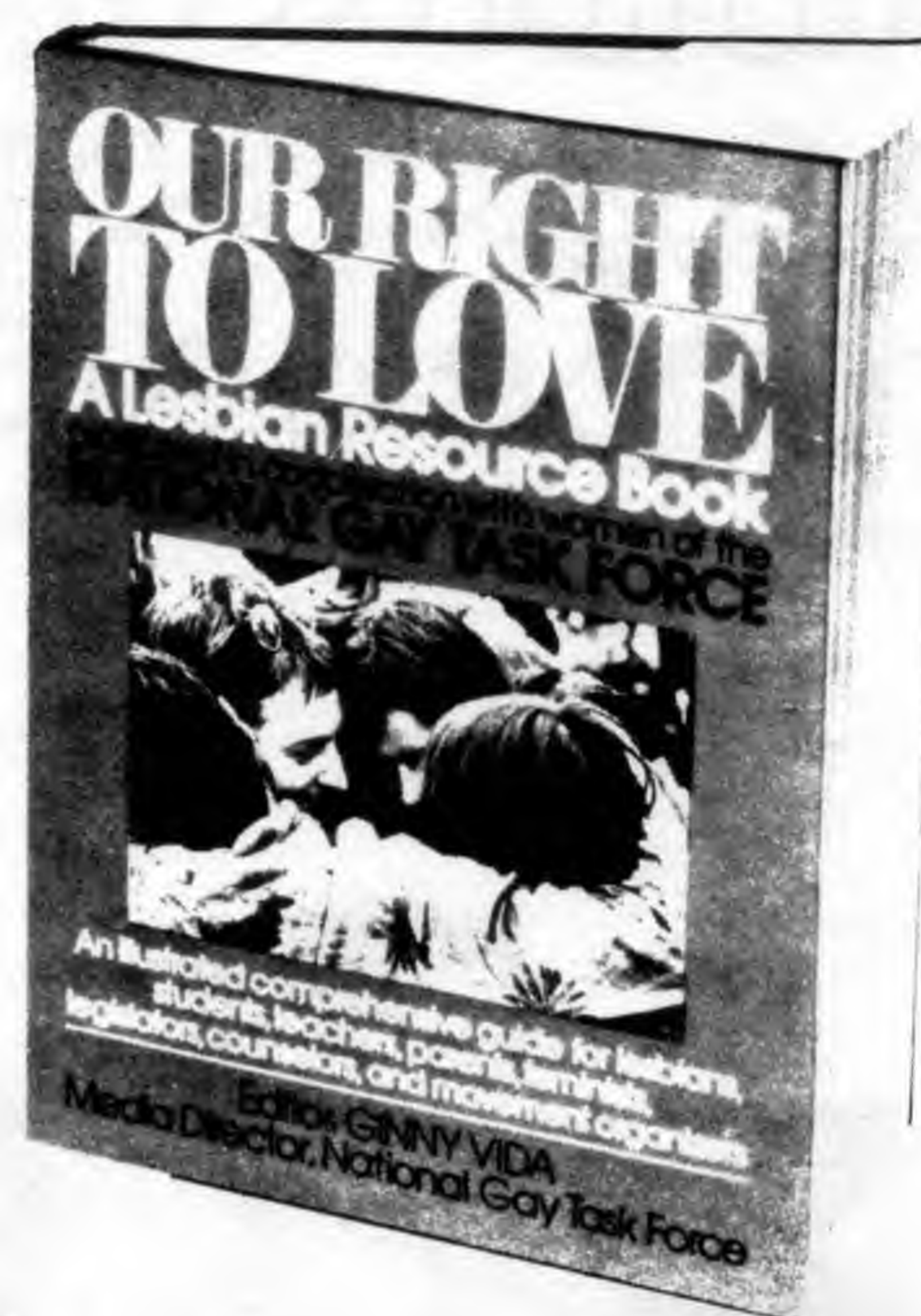
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A Lesbian Resource Book

OUR RIGHT TO LOVE

Editor: GINNY VIDA
Media Director,
National Gay Task Force



Here is the first authoritative, comprehensive resource guide on lesbianism ever written.

Reflecting a growing awareness of the special concerns of lesbians, this ambitious project embodies the spirit of the basic human rights issues of *all* women and presents an explosive, stimulating exploration of the nature and scope of lesbian life-styles. *Our Right To Love* succeeds in erasing the myths, the stereotypes, and the misjudgements concerning female homosexuality. It overcomes the misconceptions that have surrounded lesbians for decades by drawing on the candor, sensitivity, talents, and extraordinary skills of women from across the country.

Including information dealing with counseling, health services, bookstores, finding or starting lesbian organizations, meeting other women, and much more—legal issues, parenthood for lesbians, sexual experiences, religious encounters, personal testimonies from lesbians of every race, professional background, and economic class—*Our Right To Love* provides new perspectives on lesbianism and the far-reaching implications affecting *all* women.

"The articles in this book are people trying to tell you about their lives. . . . This book demonstrates not just how far lesbians have come, but how far America has moved on the issue of individual liberty. Five years ago this book could not have been published. Five years ago the truth was not welcome about us." —Rita Mae Brown, *From the Foreword*

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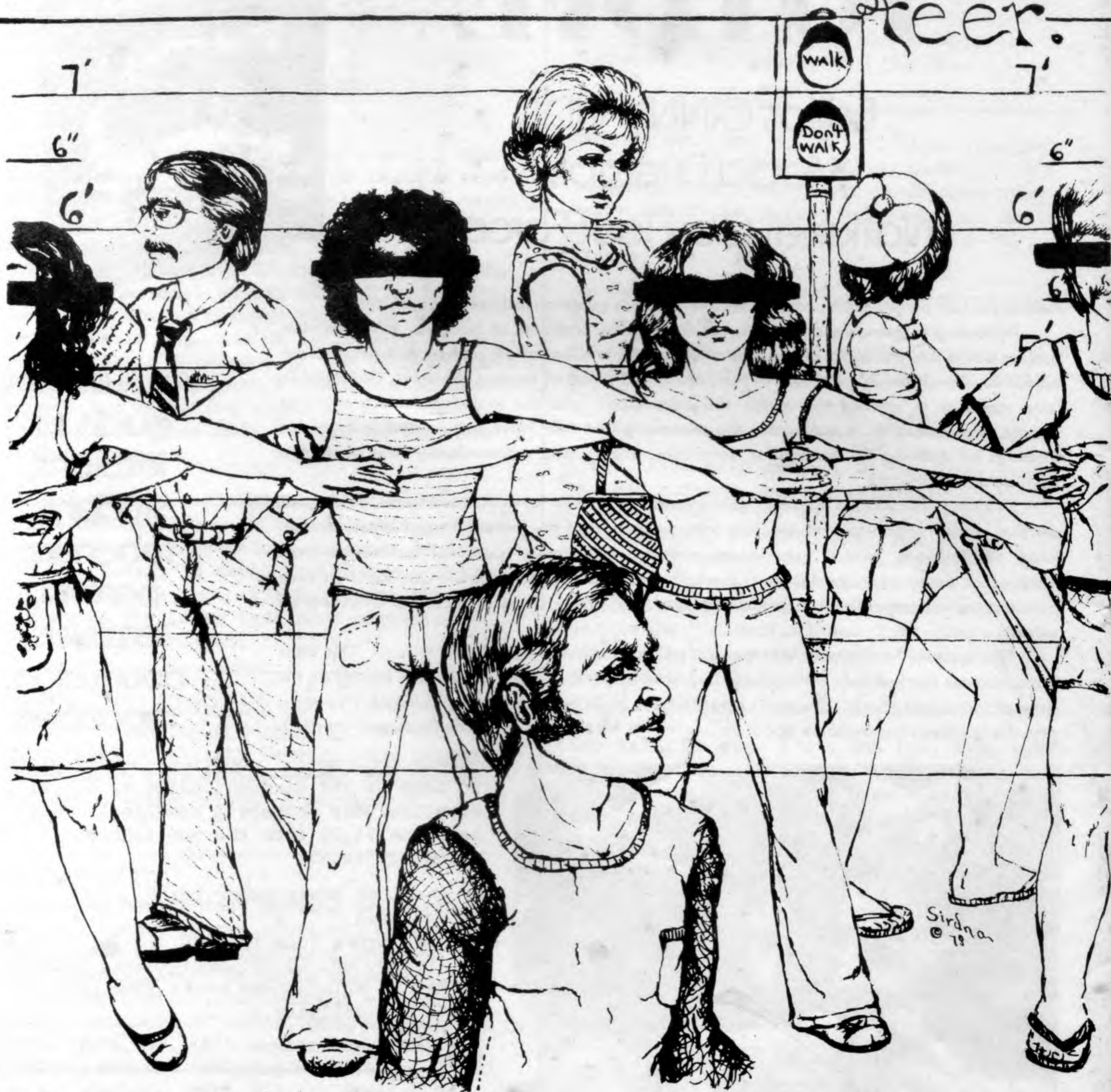
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